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Broadcasters Letter

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United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2742

December 1, 1995

AG EXPORTS SET RECORD -- U.S. agricultural exports hit a record high at \$54.2 billion exceeding last year's level by \$10.7 million. U.S. Department of Agriculture's U.S. Agricultural Trade Update shows that higher feed grain, oilseed, cotton and poultry meat export values were behind the increase. The gain in exports, combined with nearly-steady imports, resulted in a September agricultural trade balance of \$2.4 billion. The fiscal 1995 agriculture trade balance was \$23.7 billion, compared with \$17.1 billion last year. Fiscal 1995 corn shipments totaled 58.6 million tons, wheat shipments reached 32.1 million tons, and soybeans reached 23.6 million tons. Japan continued as the major buyer of U.S. agricultural products in fiscal 1995, with imports of \$10.5 billion, 14 percent higher than fiscal 1994. The European Union (EU) was the second biggest importer of U.S. agricultural products. Canada and Mexico follow the EU as major buyers of agricultural commodities from the U.S. **Contact: Wayne Baggett (202) 720-2032.**

AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK FORUM -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold its annual Agricultural Outlook Forum, February 21-22, 1996, in Washington, DC. Forum will open Wednesday, February 21, at 1:00 p.m., with a focus on the challenges of expanding international agricultural trade. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman is scheduled to present the keynote address. Plenary sessions will cover strategies for U.S. agriculture, economic and agricultural prospects, relationships with key farm trade partners, and the impact on U.S. farmers of the new policy and trade environment. On February 22, government and private analysts will give detailed commodity prospects for 1996 and future years. **Contact: Raymond Bridge (202) 720-5447.**

USDA RELEASES SPECIAL UPLAND COTTON QUOTA -- High cotton prices have triggered, for the thirteenth time, a special import quota that will permit importation of a quantity of upland cotton equal to one week's domestic mill use, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced (November 24). The special import quota permitting the importation of 43,624,810 kilograms (96,176,321 pounds) of upland cotton was established November 29. The quota applies to upland cotton purchased not later than February 26, 1996, and entered into the U.S. not later than May 26, 1996. The special import quota identifies a quantity of imports that is not subject to the over-quota tariff rate of a tariff-rate quota. **Contact: Janise Zygmont (202) 720-8841.**

SCIENTISTS UNCOVER DISEASE MECHANISM -- USDA scientists have begun to uncover the disease-causing mechanism of a toxin call fumonisin. Fusarium fungi that can infect corn make this toxin. In rare instances, farm animals become sick after consuming corn containing high levels of fumonisin. U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service and Emory University scientists found a direct link between fumonisin and essential fats in plants and animals. This discovery may lead to reducing the fumonisin threat. Little is known about the dietary role or biological function of the mysterious fats. But, the new findings suggest they help protect plants and animals from disease. **Contact: Richard Russell (706) 546-3377.**

REFERENDUM ON FLUID MILK PROMOTION PROGRAM ANNOUNCED -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold a referendum Feb. 29 - March 7, 1996, to determine whether fluid milk processors favor continuation of the fluid milk promotion program. USDA's Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) oversees the fluid milk program as well as other research and promotion programs. AMS administrator Lon Hatamiya said, "Under the Fluid Milk Promotion Act, handlers processing and marketing more than 500,000 pounds of fluid milk products during September 1995 are eligible to vote in the referendum. In order to vote, eligible handlers will be required to register." The National Fluid Milk Promotion Board, which administers the program, requested the referendum. **Contact: Becky Unkenholz (202) 720-8998.**

LIME INDUSTRY ENDS PROMOTION PROGRAM -- Members of the lime industry have voted to discontinue their national research, promotion and consumer information order. The referendum was conducted Nov. 1 - 15, 1995. Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service Lon Hatamiya said, "Results of the referendum indicate that only 28 percent of the producers, producer-handlers and importers who voted in the referendum favor continuing the order. Therefore, the order will be terminated in the near future." To continue the program, voters had to approve the order by a simple majority. Persons who produced, produced and handled, or imported 200,000 pounds or more of limes for the fresh market between Sept. 1, 1994, and Aug. 31, 1995, were eligible to vote. **Contact: Gill High (202) 720-8998.**

INTERNET GAINS NEW RESOURCE ON PESTICIDES -- Water pollution by agrichemicals can be better evaluated with a new Internet resource. The Agricultural Research Service Pesticide Database is now available worldwide to pesticide companies, water resource managers, farmers, environmental groups and others. It covers hundreds of pesticides, including more than 95 percent of the most popular ones for controlling weed, insect and fungal pests of crops. For each pesticide, the database describes up to 16 chemical, physical, and biological features that influence its breakdown rate and likelihood of entering surface or groundwater. The data are for use in crop and soil computer models. These models account for soil, temperature, and other local factors that affect pesticides. This database appears on the World Wide Web site of the ARS Systems Research Laboratory. **Contact: Basil Acock (301) 504-5827.**

USDA SEEKS COMMENTS ON MARKETING ORDER -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking written comments on a recommended decision proposing a federal marketing agreement and order for tart cherries grown in Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin. Administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service Lon Hatamiya said, "The proposal is based on the record of a series of hearing sessions held in 1993, 1994, and 1995." The hearing was requested by the Cherry Marketing Institute, a major industry organization, on behalf of interested cherry growers, processors or handlers. Hatamiya added, "After reviewing the comments and making any necessary modifications, USDA will decide whether to conduct a referendum to determine support for the proposal. The proposed agreement and order would authorize volume, grade, size, and maturity regulations, including mandatory inspection. It would also authorize production, processing, and marketing research, promotion projects, and paid advertising." **Contact: Gil High (202) 720-8998.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 2009 -- Fewer Americans would go hungry if restaurants, cafeterias and other food service establishments would "glean" their leftover foods, sending them to soup kitchens, churches and homeless shelters, instead of dumping them. Leslie Parker reports on a USDA effort to encourage "gleaning." (**Weekly cassette -- five minute documentary**).

CONSUMER TIME # 1488 -- An ancient "tree"-dition. It's Christmas tree time again!! A special program for youth at risk. The ins and outs of home businesses. Food safety even more vital to seniors. (**Weekly cassette -- consumer features**).

AGRITAPE # 2001 -- Russia and the World Trade Organization. Solving the turkey disease mystery. Red meat demand strong. Broiler and turkey returns good. Trying to take the "mystery" out of the Christmas tree industry. (**Weekly cassette -- news features**).

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE-- Tuesday, December 5, crop/weather update. *****Note***** There are no pre-scheduled USDA reports from December 6 through December 8. Our newsline will, as always, carry breaking news stories on those days. Monday, December 11, cotton supply/demand outlook. Tuesday, December 12, U.S. crop production, U.S. supply/demand situation. ****On Tuesday, December 12, we will update the newsline twice.** **Update times: 10:30 a.m. EST and 5:00 p.m. EST.** Wednesday, December 13, feed outlook, soybean outlook, world oilseed outlook, rice outlook, wheat outlook, dairy outlook and world grain production and trade. These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5:00 p.m., ET, each working day and 10:30 a.m. on crop report days.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES: **Patrick O'Leary** reports on the World Congress of Wholesale Food Marketing. **Lynn Wyvill** reports on Buck Hollow Watershed Enhancement Project in Oregon. This is a cooperative effort of landowners, government agencies (including USDA) and other interested groups to restore this watershed.

ACTUALITIES: **Gus Schumacher**, administrator of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, reports on the latest export trade figures from USDA.

SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS: Thursdays at 3:45-4:00 p.m. ET on Telstar 303, Transponder 5H(horizontal), Channel 10, Downlink Frequency 3900 MHz, Audio, 6.2/6.8.

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services. Call Larry Quinn, (202)720-6072, or write to: Room 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300. Internet E-mail: LQuinn@USDA.GOV.

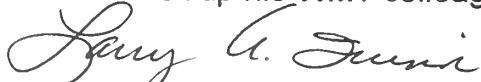
OFF MIKE

WHERE'S THE BEEF?...That's a question that KGAN-TV (Cedar Rapids, IA) will be asking during the next several months as they follow progress of a beef calf through next summer to examine beef industry dynamics firsthand, reports Farm Director **Wade Wagner**. Marketing, genetics and the latest consumer news related to beef production will be covered. In the past, KGAN-TV has grown an acre of corn, raised feeder pigs and followed a sheep flock. Wade recently earned the Iowa Citizen Award from Epsilon Sigma Phi, honorary society for Extension Service professionals. Annual award goes to persons contributing to growth and development of Iowa communities and working cooperatively with Iowa State University Extension.

FARMERS APPRECIATION BREAKFAST...is being planned for January 12 by **Larry Derry** (WLMD, Macomb, IL). Larry says this an annual event to honor local farmers, and tickets are available through area merchants (such as banks, fertilizer companies and cooperatives). He knows what farming is like because he operates a 700-acre corn/soybean farm of his own. Larry's been a farm broadcaster for the past three years, but a sportscaster for 27 years before that. Today, his "play-by-play" descriptions are in agricultural terms.

NEW BROADCASTER...covering farm news for KMNS (Sioux City, IA) is **Bob Bakken**. Bob's number is (712) 258-0628. He replaces **Emery Kleven** who along with colleague **Colonel John Phillips** moved to KOLK (Sioux City, IA). Their phone number is (712) 258-5655.

TECHNOLOGY...has brought the biggest changes to radio farm broadcasting during the 40 years that **Bob Nance** (WMT, Cedar Rapids, IA) has been behind the mike. It's not just audio technology advances, but also how market information has evolved from teletype to computer and satellite delivery for up-to-the-minute reporting. Bob came out of retirement in 1992 to work part-time to back up his WMT colleague **Rich Balvanz**.



LARRY A. QUINN, Director
Video, Teleconference and Radio Center

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